CHALLENGE

FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM ★ LUCHA POR EL COMUNISMO ★ PLP

THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

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100 Days of Genocide

TO STOP GENOCIDE, SMASH CAPITALISM



January 13, Washington, DC—Marking 100 days after Israel's fascist attack on working class in Gaza, at least tens of thousands rallied and marched here to condemn Israel's genocidal attacks, calling for the liberation of Palestine "from the river to the sea." Progressive Labor Party brought the message that the liberation of the working class, from Palestine to the U.S. and China, will come with communist revolution and global working-class unity. This message resonated with marchers, as they eagerly took 500 Challenge newspapers and hundred-plus communist leaflets from PL'ers, with some making donations to build the PLP.

The PLP rallied within the broader rally behind a banner calling for communist revolution. A leader of the local transit union declared that ATU Local 689, based on the initiative of PLPers in the union, voted overwhelmingly to demand a ceasefire in Palestine and an end to U.S. supply of weapons and money to Israel. But, he added, it was time for the labor movement to move beyond resolutions and take job actions and solidarity strikes to force the U.S. bosses to stop supporting Israel's military devastation of Gaza, eliciting cheers from the crowd. "Not another penny, not another dime, No more support for Israel's crimes!"

Another PLP member, suspended from her job teaching middle school for Facebook posts opposing Israel's murders of children, called on the

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JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL FIGHT FOR COMMUNIST REVOLUTION





OUR FIGHT

✰Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to destroy capitalism and the dictatorship of the capitalist class. We organize workers, soldiers and youth into a revolutionary movement for communism.

✰The dictatorship of the working class — communism—can provide a lasting solution to the disaster that is today's world for billions of people. This cannot be done through electoral politics, but requires a revolutionary movement and a mass Red Army led by PLP.

✰Worldwide capitalism, in its relentless drive for profit, inevitably leads to war, fascism, poverty, disease, starvation and environmental destruction. The capitalist class, through its state power — governments, armies, police, schools and culture — maintains a dictatorship over the world's workers. The capitalist dictatorship supports, and is supported by, the anti-working-class ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, individualism and religion.

✰While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions worldwide. Capitalism returned to Russia and China because socialism retained many aspects of the profit system, like wages and privileges. Russia and China did not establish communism.

✰Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. While capitalism needs unemployment, communism needs everyone to contribute and share in society's benefits and burdens.

✰Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of "race." Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit Black, Latin, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.

✰Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women— sexism—and divisive gender roles created by the class society.

✰Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

✰Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion's false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.

✰Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!

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WHO WRITES FOR CHALLENGE?

CHALLENGE is for the working class, produced by the working class. The fact that CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed grows from PLP's criticism of the cult of the individual in the former socialist Soviet Union and China. We do not want to encourage the possibility of building up a "following" around any particular individual.
While an article may be written by one person, the final version is based on collective discussion and criticism. Many times this collective discussion even precedes an individual's writing of an article.

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Editorial

Smash imperialism and nationalism in Gaza

After more than 100 days and 29,000 bombs, the genocidal Israeli "Defense" Forces have leveled the Gaza Strip to an uninhabitable concrete graveyard. This U.S.-backed military is killing more than 250 civilians in Gaza every day, a higher rate than in any other conflict in this century (Aljazeera, 1/11). The death toll now surpasses 24,000, including over 10,000 children—more than one percent of Gaza's population.

Genocide is the physical destruction of a group of people and the communities that knit them together—the classrooms where their children learn to read, the bakeries that make their daily bread. The families in Gaza who fight for survival each day are surrounded by rubble. More than two thirds of homes, schools, hospitals, parks, libraries, and olive groves have been decimated by the nonstop Zionist bombardment. Drinkable water, electricity, fuel, and medicine are scarce commodities (Wall Street Journal, 12/30/23). Since October, Israel's criminal invasion has caused nine terrifying communications blackouts (New York Times, 1/12). Nine of ten people in Gaza, nearly half of them children, go without food for whole days. The United Nations is predicting famine—widespread starvation—by February (aljazeera.com, 12/23/23).

Israel's devastation of infrastructure is an act of ethnic cleansing—to push all or most Arab workers out of Gaza altogether. "What needs to be done in the Gaza Strip is to encourage emigration," said Israeli Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich. "If there are 100,000 or 200,000 Arabs in Gaza and not 2 million Arabs, the entire discussion on the day after will be entirely different" (msn.com, 1/5). The Israeli rulers' most powerful argument for "resettlement" is to make Gaza uninhabitable. It's a vicious, racist strategy enabled by arms and political cover from baby-killer Joe Biden and the capitalist rulers who run him. The U.S. bosses, led by the likes of ExxonMobil and JPMorgan Chase, are the world's most deadly state terrorists. Their heinous attack on workers in Palestine makes our task of organizing for communist revolution even more urgent.

U.S. bosses kill to protect profits

The catastrophe in Gaza is part of a larger battle between the U.S., European, and Israeli bosses, on one side, and rival imperialists in China and Russia, which back regional power Iran, on the other. The three-month-old conflict in the oil-rich Middle East is steadily expanding. In response to Iran-backed Houthi attacks on ships in the commercially and strategically vital Red Sea, the U.S. Army and its allies have bombed more than 30 sites inside Yemen. On January 16, Iran jumped directly into the simmering fray with missile strikes on neighboring Pakistan and Iraq, ostensibly in response to terrorist attacks within its borders. Iran-backed militias have also repeatedly targeted U.S. troops in Iraq and Syria.

U.S. interests in the region are so crucial to the bosses that they're clamping down on their liberal stooges with a blunt message: No criticism of Israel will be tolerated. Claudine Gay was forced to resign as president of Harvard University after her weak support for genocide offended wealthy Zionist donors. Like "the good Germans" who looked the other way in the face of the Nazis' rise in Germany in the 1930s, liberal misleaders have stayed largely silent on the ongoing slaughter in Gaza. From Democratic Party politicians to union bosses and clergy, the overwhelming majority have fallen in line in support of genocide, if only by their silence. They have exposed their true allegiance to U.S. capitalism and the war and fascism that the profit system demands.

Hamas nationalism is poison for workers in Palestine

In Gaza, workers and their families are heroically resisting death and destruction. Medical workers go days without sleep to tend to the sick and injured. Families share whatever shelter they have. Relatives and friends take in orphaned children. Adults go without food and water to keep their children alive as they dodge the latest 2,000-pound bomb from Israeli planes.

Their suffering has not gone unmarked by the international working class. Millions of workers and students around the world are demanding an immediate ceasefire. Aid workers are imploring the UN to remove Israeli blockades on humanitarian support (AP, 1/16). On January 13, in mass demonstrations around the world, workers marched under Palestinian flags for a "free Palestine." Meanwhile, top political figures in Hamas, the de facto leaders of this national liberation movement, are mostly missing in action in Gaza. They are busy brokering weapons deals in Beirut or with their patrons in Iran as they maneuver for more power.

Workers must reject the misleadership of Hamas just as we reject the U.S. liberals who demand our silence on the crimes of Israel. The Hamas leadership calls for the creation of an Islamist-capitalist state. For all workers who deplore the atrocities of capitalism, the Hamas vision is just more of the same nightmare.

The history of Iran is a cautionary tale for the future of Gaza and the West Bank. For decades after World War II, the U.S backed the brutal regime of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. Beginning in the late 1960's, communists in the Tudeh Party and other leftist movements led resistance to the Shah and his ties to U.S. imperialism. At the same time, Islamists led by the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini fought for an Islamist-capitalist state. In 1979, the left joined forces with the Islamists to overthrow the Shah. But immediately upon securing control over Iran's new government, Khomeini denounced the communists and soon banned the Tudeh Party and imprisoned over 10,000 members (https://merip.org/, March-April, 1982). In 1988, the Iranian ruling class executed tens of thousands of leftists (France 24, 10/8/21). Though left-wing forces in Iran were instrumental in defeating U.S. imperialism, their terrible error in backing "progressive" Islamist nationalists has left the workers there in capitalist misery to this day.

The only solution is communist revolution

The communist revolutions that put the working class in power in the Soviet Union and China should continue to inspire workers of the world today. At the same time, we must also learn from and overcome these revolutions' mistakes, including the embrace of nationalism. [See Road to Revolution III at plp.org.]

Workers in South Africa, Vietnam, Congo, Haiti, Nicaragua, Mozambique, and many more have fought courageously to oust imperialist colonial forces. But over and over again, we have seen wars for national liberation replace one set of capitalists with another. They ultimately benefit only the new set of bosses. Meanwhile, workers continue to suffer. The movement for communism—for a society run by and for the international working class—is set back.

The mass murder in Gaza is an attack on workers everywhere. To defend our class, we cannot be lulled into silence or make popular concessions to nationalism. When we say that the only solution is communist revolution, we know we have a long struggle ahead. We also know that nothing short of communist revolution will end imperialist war, racism, sexism, and exploitation. The historic victories in the Soviet Union and China are evidence that workers—ourselves, our coworkers, our families and friends—can change the world. Progressive Labor Party calls for unity with our class sisters and brothers to denounce the genocide in Gaza, to reject capitalist misleadership, and to fight on for communist revolution. Join us!✪

Red school: 'Fight to learn, learn to fight'

We want to make it clear that we can win to a [communist] perspective 99 percent of the forces who hold nationalist ideas.

Revolutionaries Must Fight Nationalism, PLP key document

NEW YORK, January 14—Over the long weekend, 25 members and friends of the Progressive Labor Party (PLP) participated in a cadre school that exposed nationalism and advanced the need for an internationalist communist movement organized by the PLP. Our collective discussions will help us better understand the world, steel ourselves to fight back and grow PLP to liberate our class from capitalism. Our conclusion: we need communism to do so.

Participants included recent college graduates, a high school student, and workers with several different occupations (teachers, fitness trainers, a paraprofessional, a construction worker, a journalist, a lash tech, a social worker, a stay-at-home dad, and a retired doctor, just to name a few). The cadre school was multi-racial and multi-gendered, with leadership provided by younger members, several of whom are Black workers.

1. Where we are at

In the first workshop of the weekend, we discussed the state of the world. We read how 2023 was chock full of tragedies and capitalist horrors for the international working class, yet it was also brimming with fightback and brought with it more opportunities to build PLP and a working-class movement to smash this genocidal system.

We discussed how hard it can be to combat the cynicism and apathy that many workers and youth feel with the capitalist world as it is. Still, to not fight back is to resign ourselves to defeat. By building a communist movement with a long-term outlook, we know that one day we will turn these tragedies into their opposite. One worker shared how despite being one of the few Latino workers on his job, he is committed to fighting racist ideas and ignorance around him. This commitment to fighting back is exactly the sort of resistance with a long-term outlook the cadre school aimed to foster.

2. What we need to fight

In our second workshop, we discussed the dangers of all forms of nationalism, even so-called revolutionary nationalism. We read about specific case studies in Ukraine, Palestine, the Horn of Africa, and Israel to see how nationalism hurts workers in those regions of the world. We broke into smaller groups to focus on these case studies and then shared what we learned with one another.

As the Israeli ruling class carries out a genocide against workers in Palestine, Palestinian bosses have nothing to offer our class siblings but profiteering and pipedreams. The Palestinian ruling class, which only consists of a handful of rich families, has historically fled to neighboring nations to invest in new commercial ventures and rebuild their businesses.

In the Horn of Africa, imperialists and their lackeys have driven workers to famine through ongoing wars and power struggles. In Ukraine, the construction of a national identity and state has done nothing but give workers the option to die allying themselves with bloodsoaked US imperialists over bloodsoaked Russian imperialists.

One youth expressed his desire to join the army to defend workers in Ukraine against Russian imperialism. This prompted one of the most lively discussions of the weekend. While some friends thought it important to warn of the dangers of war, several PL'ers chimed in to explain that no imperialist war would benefit workers. If we are enlisting in the military, it must be to help turn soldiers' guns around. The only war the working class needs is class war!

3. Where we are going

To finish out the weekend, our final workshop discussed the need for communism and critiqued the rise of identity politics. We discussed the ways that Black capitalists, women capitalists, and queer capitalists have only continued the racism and exploitation of workers around the world. We highlighted PLP's line that we can and must move directly from capitalism to communism and asked the group whether such dramatic change is indeed possible.

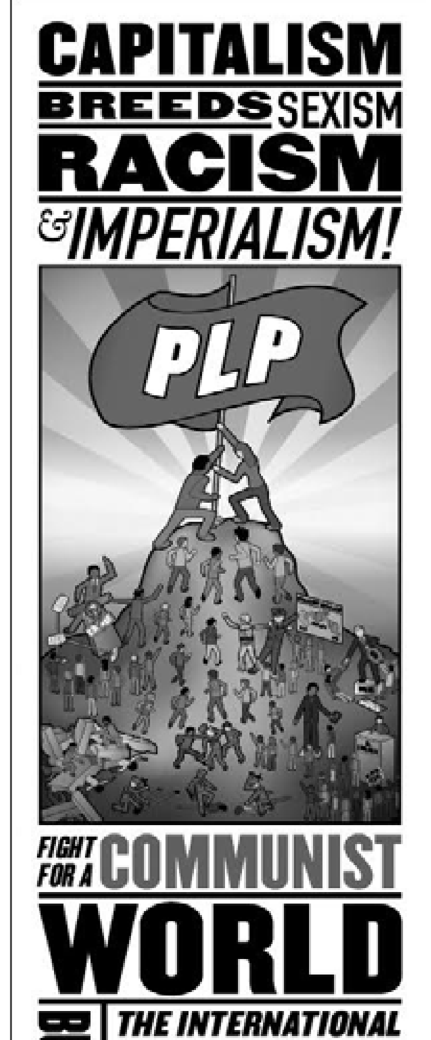
In response, one PL'er shared her family's history of fighting in wars in Eritrea. Although the struggle was ultimately nationalist despite having some Marxist-Leninist elements, her point was about how much can change in 30 years. If we fight for communism, rather than a nationalist revolution, and build our Party, imagine the amount of real change workers can achieve in even a short time!

Confidence in the working class

The cadre school showed glimmers of what is possible with communist leadership and the type of society we hope to build after a revolution. All of us took turns cooking and cleaning up after meals, and participants took turns with childcare. One member pointed out how exhausting capitalism can be and raised the need to "give one another grace" as we fight to learn and learn to fight.

One veteran comrade called this "the most united cadre school" he has been a part of. It was an example of how we can win millions to a communist understanding of the world through study and struggle. As one participant said, "ordinary people can do extraordinary things." We have a better world to win. Join us.

L.A rally raps zionist butchers



LOS ANGELES, January 7- "Joe Biden, you can't hide, we charge you with genocide"; "If we don't get it (an immediate ceasefire), shut it down." These and other chants rang through the air as 150 mainly young Palestinian demonstrators and supporters rallied in front of the Israeli Consulate in LA. and they condemned the Zionist regime's genocide in Gaza. The demonstrators then took to the streets and partially shut down traffic on Wilshire Boulevard.

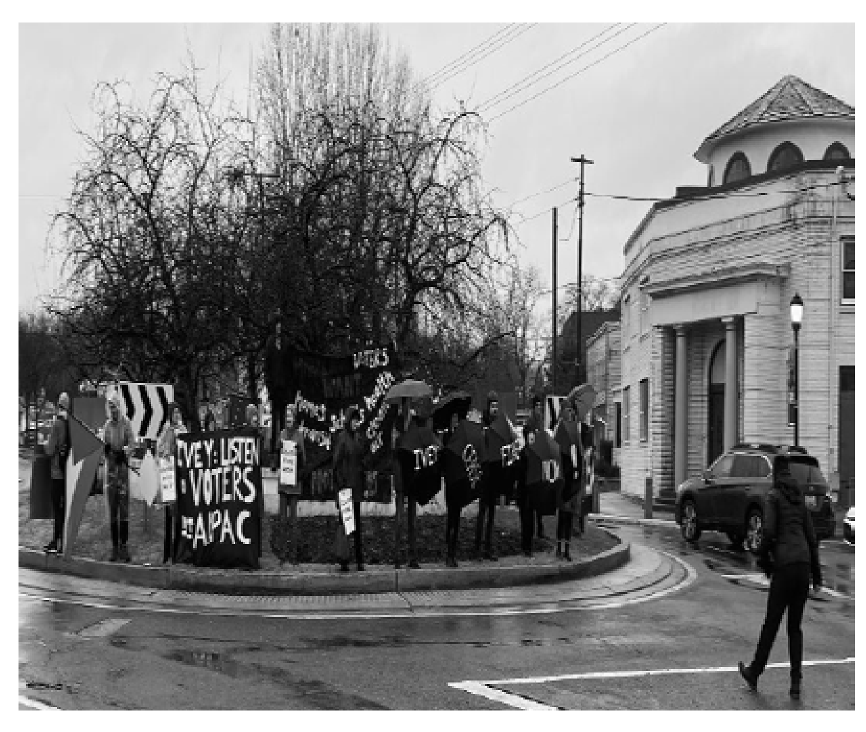
Progressive Labor Party members joined the rally and march and held signs saying "Arab, Jewish, Black, Brown, White; Workers of the World Unite." The nationalist leadership of the action focused on demands for a ceasefire and to "Free Palestine." Our comrades distributed 50 flyers with the editorial from the current CHALLENGE newspaper which exposes the danger of wider wars in this oil-soaked tinderbox of the world and calls for international working class unity against imperialist wars for profit and against all forms of nationalism.

Our group here is struggling to become more involved in the fledgling, but growing, anti-war movement that has taken root in the U.S. and around the world.

An upcoming meeting will discuss how we can deepen our commitment to the Party, and bring our communist politics to the masses of people who have taken to the streets in the last three months.✪

Mt. Rainer, MD

Pouring opposition to politicians for genocide



Workers need communist leadership to smash the genocide loving capitalists

Mount Rainier, Maryland, January 9—A neighborhood group in this small town outside Washington, D.C. rallied in the pouring rain to protest Glenn Ivey, their congressional representative, for his outspoken support for Israel's brutal genocidal attack on Palestinians. Not surprisingly, Ivey received massive campaign contributions ($7 million!) from the leading Zionist lobbying group in the U.S., the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). (Guardian, 1/10/24). A PLP member was part of this bold group who marched to his office to deliver an anti-genocide petition with 476 signatures from his constituents. Many refused to leave his office and were arrested. The grassroots movement in solidarity with our Palestinian brothers and sisters is growing everywhere, and with communist leadership from the PLP, can build a mass revolutionary movement to topple capitalism, the cause of genocide globally.✪

This is what liberal fascism looks like:

5-year-old Jean Carlos killed in Chicago's concentration camp

CHICAGO, December 23 – Members of the international communist Progressive Labor Party (PLP) here are putting the racist liberal bosses on blast for their role in murdering our working-class siblings. Today and earlier in the week we have shared communist solidarity outside a mass shelter for migrant workers and families on the city's near west side, where a five-year-old boy named Jean Carlos Martinez Rivero fell ill and died on December 17th.

As communist revolutionaries, we openly declare that a racist capitalist system that cannot guarantee the safety of children doesn't deserve to exist and needs to be destroyed. While liberal politicians like Mayor Brandon Johnson offer empty words of condolences and point blame at their political rivals for stoking chaos, none of them have any real solutions for the genocides unleashed on our class. Their position under the system keeps them beholden to capitalism's need for profit and war.

The only solution to genocide and war, to this sick system murdering children from Chicago to Gaza, is to build a revolutionary class struggle under the leadership of the mass PLP. When we say justice for Jean Carlos and so many others, we mean building the fight for an egalitarian communist world!



From Chicago to Palestine our children deserve nothing short of a communist future

In the scene with communist solidarity

The thing most tragic about the death of Jean Carlos is that it was almost certainly avoidable. He and his family had been staying at the former warehouse turned shelter for barely three weeks, herded like cattle next to hundreds of others in a public health catastrophe. Over 2,000 migrant workers and youth were cramped at the same wretched site. In addition to Jean Carlos, four other children and two adults from the shelter were hospitalized in the same week (WTTW, 12/21).

Community organizers quickly organized a memorial vigil outside the shelter for Jean Carlos on the Wednesday after his death. PLP members attended, bringing not just our sympathy, medicine, and some clothes to donate but also our righteous class anger. While everyone present found some comfort in grieving collectively, many workers felt inspired by our sign that read "Justice for Jean Carlos – A system that can't guarantee the safety of children doesn't deserve to exist." Many came up to take pictures, get a copy of CHALLENGE, exchange contact information, and share stories of their struggles under the system.

Today we returned to the same site with an even larger contingent of comrades to continue expressing our solidarity with workers all over the world. We brought pitchers full of warm champurrado to share, along with more CHALLENGEs, medicine, and winter clothing. PLP members took to the bullhorn and gave speeches in Spanish that placed the blame squarely on the bosses for so much chaos. We quickly distributed close to 200 CHALLENGEs and made more contacts.

In a situation of seemingly inescapable desperation and disorder, we point out not only the limits but also the potential. As one comrade shared in his speech, "We are a small party of workers and students. We don't have many resources and we haven't taken state power yet from the bosses. But what we do have is our communist ideas and internationalism, which are powerful and will one day create a revolution to build a better world."

The capitalists' "solutions" are killing us

The train wreck of a response from the Chicago city bosses to tens of thousands of migrant workers and youth arriving over the past year and a half demonstrates not only their treachery to our class but also the bankruptcy of their so-called "solutions."

"Progressive" but still capitalist politicians like Brandon Johnson can call out the blatant racism of gutter fascists like Texas Governor Greg Abbott or Florida's Ron DeSantis for sending busloads of workers from the southern U.S. states. However, his criticism conveniently leaves out the role that his faction of the U.S. ruling class, the Big Fascist wing, has historically played in destabilizing national economies around the world through their control of international finance capital and command of the world's largest military.

These Big Fascist bosses (mostly Democratic Party "liberal" hacks) position themselves as the more "humane" alternative even as their aid can never be more than a Band-Aid on a mortal wound. Even if shelter conditions were to dramatically improve, there is little to no path for most migrant workers to integrate themselves more widely into a capitalist system in crisis. The status quo of the system will continue to relegate them into positions of instability and as a reserve labor pool for the bosses to super-exploit for higher profits.

We must contrast such notions of capitalism's "charity" with our vision for a worker-run communist society. Beyond just the working class receiving what we need based on our collective control of distribution, we would be free of the alienation and waste of potential that exists under capitalism. Billions of workers would finally be able to contribute towards the organization and functioning of society.

Planting the seeds for an egalitarian world

Such a reality might seem far off, but we can see the seeds of a more communist world planted in the current struggle. Countless workers in the city have volunteered their time in recent months -- from cooks to carpenters to student doctors -- not because they expect to be paid, but rather because they understand their common existence with workers forced to migrate by capitalism.

PLP will continue to fight alongside workers wherever we are to minimize the immediate harm of this racist system while stressing the need to overthrow it entirely. In the memory of Jean Carlos and so many others, we deserve nothing less.✪

East Africa:

Hell to Zionist ideology, long live working-class unity

EAST AFRICA, January 12—On this day when East Africa celebrates the Zanzibar Revolution of 1964, Progressive Labor Party (PLP) held a meeting of young students and teachers to discuss the genocide in Gaza and how we can fight against this imperialist oppression that is killing innocent children and women and disrupting the day-to-day life of millions of people.

Many participants who are religious Christians were defending Israel's killing of Palestinians because the Bible says Israel is a holy state given to the Jews by God. We presented the real history behind this war as the product of capitalist expansion, and we exposed U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken's role in continuing the Nakba of 1948 when the October 7th ethnic cleansing campaign to decimate Palestinians began. We also exposed the religious ideology as a tool of capitalists to maintain their interests and disunite workers.

We watched different revolutionary movies about why Zanzibar had a bloody revolution in 1964 and about Marxist Thomas Sankara (the Upright Man), former president of Burkina Faso. Under his leadership, the rate of literacy there increased from 13 percent in 1983 to 73 percent in 1987. We discussed that only by making a revolution with a mass working-class movement can we win the struggle against all false ideas and the humiliation by imperialists against other states and societies in the world. If we build a strong movement led by PLP to fight for a communist society we can win our struggle and form one society in the world with no racism, gender inequality, or nationalist fighting as is happening in Gaza and Sudan. Only by achieving communism can we build a new international peace. ✪

Colombia:

Ruling-class divisions over imperialist U.S.-Israel

COLOMBIA, January 17—In Colombia, after the surge of the conflict in Gaza in October, the government of Gustavo Petro has taken a different position than the majority of governments, refusing to condemn the Hamas attacks, questioning the incursion of the Israeli army, and talking about the role of the Zionist mercenaries in the shaping of paramilitarism in Colombia and the subsequent wave of violence that has plagued the countryside and the cities for decades.

Petro has clearly stated that he favors a peace accord that recognizes the two states. He also said, he rejects what "the extreme right wings of both countries that will take both societies to a conflict where all will be defeated" that the Colombian government supports the National Palestinian Authority that is against Hamas.

Petro masquerades as "pro-Palestine", but quietly supports genocide

Petro has been criticized for his position by the Zionists and the more conservative sectors of the Colombian bourgeoise, traditional ally of Israel. Gilinki, a Jewish banker and oligarch exploiter of the working class of Colombia, has declared his consternation over the declarations of the president, who recently compared Israel's military intervention with the Holocaust, making this a choice between supporting the Israeli bosses or the Palestinian bosses. Critical point that has created a wedge inside the national bourgeoise.

Recently this ideological dispute between Petro and the defenders of Israel in Colombia has deepened, especially after the president condemned the Israeli's army attacks on journalists, as of this writing 109 journalist have been killed and his approval of the suit against Israel by South Africa in the International Court of Justice in the Hague, for violating the provisions if the 1948 Convention against genocide.

However, these liberal positions that the Colombian government has taken regarding one of the bloodiest conflicts of our time, where 24,000 people have been killed, most of them workers, has not translated into real measures of support for the Palestinian resistance, reducing them to sending humanitarian aid, or calling to consult the Colombian ambassador to Israel, or the support of Argelia's denouncement of Benjamin Netanyahu for war crimes in the International Criminal Court and the demand presented by South Africa.

As we can see, Petro's support is towards the Palestinian government, not the resistance of the workers in Palestine. We also need to point out that the Colombian government has kept all the commercial relations and especially the military connections with Israel, the "anger" of the president has been reduced to mere words.

Petro defends and shares the imperialist policies of two states, and to serve this purpose he presents his political strategy of a Peace Conference for Palestine. His refusal to condemn Hamas and support the genocide by Israel, demands breaking relations with Israel and to assume an effective support of Palestine, but he has shown the weakness and limits of his foreign policies when maintaining his opposition to Israel only tangentially, defending only the recognition of a Palestinian state, led by murderous bourgeoise who use nationalism as a form of control of the masses.

Even though the protests in Colombia against Zionism in the last three months have not been as massive as those in the USA, UK, France, New Zealand, Turkey and others, a solidarity committee has been created for the Palestinian cause formed araba activists, independent political organizations, defenders of human rights, student collectives, amongst others. They have called for massive demonstrations in support of Palestine and spreading the real situation in Gaza, which has not been properly presented by the media, national or international, who serve the Zionist bourgeoise.

Internationalism is essential for workers

Although we understand that these actions are revisionists, because they are limited to the defense of the constitution of the Palestinian state for a free Palestine, they are the first step towards the international solidarity mobilization of the workers against the bosses' wars. We have to be clear that marching does not a revolution make, and that only communism can eradicate the state violence against the working class. We have to promote communist education to be able to canalize the potential of the masses in movement.

In PLP we have been meeting, marching and rallying, we have shared our political line and sold . We have CHALLENGE put up front the necessity of international solidarity, fought against nationalist ideas and fought for unity of the working class. Worker's oppression will not be eliminated creating new bourgeoise states, only communism and its red flag can break our chains and end all wars.

We have been very critical of the government's position and Petro and his bland opposition on this conflict. We have shown that his support is not with the Palestinian working class, victims of the war policies, but with the Palestinian ruling class; nationalist and oppressive.

No doubt, the expansion of the conflict has made the bosses of the world take a side that benefits their interests, we have to create awareness of the dangers of nationalism, liberal fascism and defending bourgeoise wars amongst the working class.

For a free Palestine, fight for communist internationalism! ✪

Genocide means—smash bosses' dictatorship

Continued from page 1

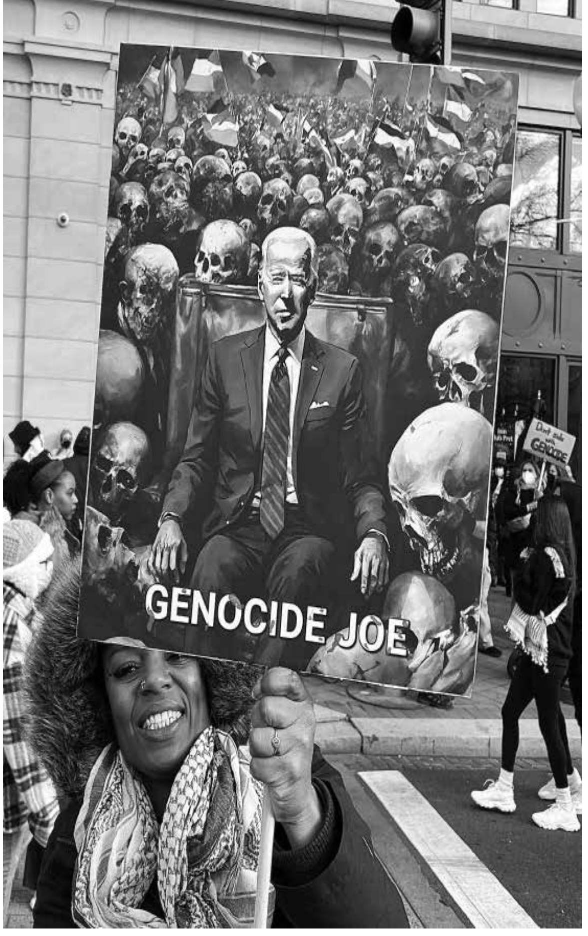
crowd to never back down. She said that, when asked by "investigators" from the school board whether she was scared by the charges of antisemitism against her, she replied, "Scared of who? Look, I was in Charlottesville fighting real Nazis, you and the Zionists don't scare me!" Dozens of contacts were made with marchers interested in the fight for communism, boding well for the long-term struggle.

A group of 150 trade unionists in D.C. rallied and marched to join the larger protest, a glimmer of what engaging the labor movement with communist leadership could mean to intensifying this struggle against genocide.

The rally in DC and other US cities was part of a global day of struggle, with millions worldwide marching to condemn Israel's attacks, demanding an immediate ceasefire, and condemning the U.S. and Genocide Joe Biden for arming Israel to the teeth as part of its imperialist project. Many of these rallies globally were held at U.S. embassies and consulates, exposing the truth that the U.S. imperialists provide military and financial backing to Israel to enable it to serve U.S. economic and political interests in the Middle East. Control over energy resources and trade routes are vital to U.S. imperialism.

Don't be lulled into complacency by countries opposing Israel

South Africa made a powerful, chilling case against Israel at the United Nation's International Court of Justice for murdering 23,000 Palestinians including thousands of children. Israel's president Isaac Herzog arrogantly dismissed the charges as "preposterous" and a "blood libel". The majority of the UN General Assembly has



Workers around the world are witnessing what the pages of CHALLENGE have been saying for years: liberals are the main danger.

supported Palestine, but the U.S. has vetoed any Security Council resolution calling for a "ceasefire" or "cessation of hostilities". The U.S. finally agreed to abstain on a meaningless resolution to improve humanitarian assistance in Gaza. But none of the countries that have lined up to support Palestine diplomatically or judicially will stop Israel. Only armed struggle can change the situation on the ground, which is exactly why the US imperialists have placed two aircraft carrier groups in the eastern Mediterranean Sea and 12 battleships in the Red Sea area to intimidate and kill any armed resistance to Israel's genocide.

A wider war looms

Inter-imperialist rivalry is intensifying globally. The genocide in Palestine is one particularly brutal instance of this. The U.S. side is weakening and shrinking, but it will not cede power, money, and influence without a fight. Already engaged in two wars (Ukraine-Russia and Israel-Palestine), depleted of much of its weaponry and with vastly understaffed armed forces, the U.S. imperialists are increasingly vulnerable as other imperialists sharpen their knives. The UN vote reflects the decline of US power. In the Middle East, several armed groups (Hezbollah in Lebanon, Houthis in Yemen, Islamic groups in Iraq and Syria) have already engaged in a limited way militarily against the U.S. and Israel. Many at today's rally understood the danger of a wider war, holding signs saying "Hands off Yemen"! Meanwhile, China's Belt and Road extends into the Middle East, Iran, Turkey, Russia, and the African continent, implicitly challenging U.S. hegemony.

For those seeking solutions to this sharpening conflict, rebuilding the communist movement on an internationalist and revolutionary basis is the first order of business. Intensifying the class struggle goes hand in hand with this approach. Let's be clear-eyed about the devastation that imperialism is creating in Palestine and the rest of the world as well, and move urgently to boldly advance into the battle against racism and genocide and for communism!✪

LETTERS

We encourage all CHALLENGE readers to send in letters and articles about their experiences fighting the bosses worldwide.

School for communism gets A from fighters

I was very grateful to have been able to come to the Cadre School this weekend. This was my first time attending and it was a very wonderful experience. Working together as a collective; working in shifts on cleaning and cooking for everyone is very heartwarming and teaches you about the world we want to build as communists. Having the opportunity to learn more is always good and even better to share that knowledge. I hope to share what I've learned here this weekend and struggle with my friends and family about communism, but I don't totally know how to go about it. Maybe next time we can learn and come up with ideas on how to approach people about communism without having them freak out about the idea.

*

I had the privilege of participating in a cadre school organized by the Progressive Labor Party, and the experience was truly enriching. With a gathering of over 20 participants, the event served as a dynamic platform for passionate discussions and deep dives into the principles of communism, spanning the past, present, and future. The sessions were dedicated to crucial topics, including being internationalist, antisexist, antiracist, anti-imperialist, and anti-capitalist.

We delved into case studies from different regions of the world, examining the struggles of workers fighting for their rights, particularly in conflict zones like Palestine and Ukraine. The overarching theme emphasized the revolutionary need to combat nationalism and imperialism, urging workers to think at the international level for a more cohesive movement.

Throughout the event, diverse readings and breakout sessions created an atmosphere that transcended mere enjoyment; it was genuinely awe-inspiring. It felt like a convergence of minds, where each participant was well-versed in global issues, collectively seeking ways to address and rectify them.

The camaraderie and shared commitment to understanding and solving the world's problems were palpable. The resounding conclusion drawn from our discussions was the imperative for a communist revolution as the ultimate solution. If there is a cadre school near you join in.

*

What stood out to me was how much our base is in agreement with us. Workers understand we do not benefit from bombing children overseas and that we do not share the same interests as the rulers.

A new understanding that I will bring back to my workplace is that we need to analyze what nationalism means to our base. We can win people to internationalism the more we break down nationalism.

Glimmers of communism that I saw were collective responsibility for chores and the meaningful struggle over internal contradictions.

*

The communal aspect of the cadre school stuck out to me most about this weekend. I feel reinvigorated by meeting comrades and understanding their perspectives on class struggle and I'm excited to put what I've learned into practice organizing my school and community. This weekend showed glimmers of future communist societies through everyone helping to do tasks, teaching others, and sharing our experiences, and in general, just existing in a space where nobody is oppressing one another and everyone is cared for.

*

As the New York Times describes millions around the world pouring into the streets to express anger and disgust at the Zionist slaughter of Palestinian families, and as World War III begins with U.S. attacks on Yemen, our Party met to train the rising generation of communist leaders. Black, Brown, white, and Asian — this youthful group represents the future of the international working class. My political batteries have been charged!

Washington in Fredericksburg, VA was disciplined for protesting about Gaza with others. A friend who is Zionist was trying to make the case for Israel's actions, but didn't make any headway on that front. Lots of political debate!

One friend told my husband later how thankful she was for us doing this. Her husband is slowly dying. It was a chance for him to see old friends and neighbors. I have a group of 7-8 women who meet for lunch and tea. For some years we have not able to connect. In 2023, we connected 3 times in the Fall! Keeping these connections helps us all keep sane and more energized for the struggle ahead.✪

The pen is a weapon against genocide

The Zionist attacks on teachers in Maryland who are opposing the Gaza genocide continue as the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) has launched a petition campaign to keep the school system from returning them to the classroom. JCRC and the Israeli American Council (IAC) are offering "educational" (really Zionist propaganda) programs on antisemitism to teachers and students in Montgomery County. IAC is an aggressive Zionist organization that Sheldon Adelson led as Trump's major funder.

He rejected the two-state option, preferring to keep Palestinians in a 2nd class-oppressed position in a Zionist single state. He got Trump to proclaim that Anti-Zionism is Anti-Semitism.

But Progressive Labor Party members are continuing to push out our ideas and recently participated in an "Open Mic" event at the local restaurant, Busboys and Poets.

The following poem was read and followed by a shout-out to the crowd to take our leaflet about the teachers and an upcoming Ceasefire rally. We have to be everywhere!

They may think they are keeping it quiet
But they can hardly hide it
It's not blue or red you see
It's always been green
The almighty dollar
It's got you by the collar
Don't you dare disobey
They have your job
You can't lose that pay
Healthcare and sick days
So do what you're told
Don't try to be bold
Don't you dare 0say one thing
When genocide is happening

Not your average brunch

I know that 2023 was a year of upheavals, strife, and horrific killings of workers through famine, wars, floods, and earthquakes. My husband and I wanted to revive our New Year's Day Brunch after 4 long years. We make the waffles and coffee and everyone else brings potluck!

A friend who has been disheartened by the genocide in Gaza told me, "It's hard to celebrate." I wrote back and said, "It is a time to reconnect with folks in a more social setting. Some folks may not have been here for years. The bosses want us to be distrustful and divided. The brunch is for that purpose."

There were many folks that I hadn't seen in years. Much political discussion took place in the various rooms of our home. The children did artwork and played with dancing flamingos. Many varied, delicious dishes were consumed. We raised money for legal fees for one of our comrades who is a teacher put on administrative leave for opposing genocide in Gaza. Another student at the University of Mary ✪

All 2023: PL'ers and friends bloomed antiracist red fightback



Workers and PL'ers in LA leading the antiracist fightback to demand justice for Ivan Solis and the lives stolen by kkkapitalism and kkkops

Dearest comrades and friends in the Los Angeles area,

The CHALLENGE board would like to take the time to salute the amazing work that you all have done in 2023 to build the struggle for communist revolution. We failed to include an appreciation of the work in the backpage article, "2024 Resolution: Fight The Bosses, Rise Up With The Working Class" (1/17).

In L.A., PL'ers marched side by side with and shared our confidence in striking hotel workers, TV/Film industry workers, fought the racist courts and kkkops against the murder of 23-year-old Latin man Cesar Rodriguez, connected antiracist fighting families together in celebration of our courage in the face of state repression, and encouraged the communist leadership of the Alex Flores family, a family that lost their loved one to racist police violence and students specifically. You all are teaching us how to fight and build the Party, thoroughly and consistently!

Fists up to you and the necessary fightback against capitalist terror, for better working conditions, and a world where workers run the world!✪

Argentina:

Pro-U.S. Milei attack our class, caught between imperialists

The elections in Argentina in October and November 2023 resulted in the return of the far right to power, with Javier Milei at its helm. For the working class, this election only made things, already bad, worse as Argentina was already going through a period of economic crisis and experiencing social difficulties linked to inflation which had risen to more than 160% in 2022. With a so-called socialist government at the helm, the standard of living of workers was diminished by corruption scandals and structural problems during the past few decades. The rightwing trend mirrors what is happening elsewhere in the world, with xenophobic, nationalist and anti-working class speeches by the newly elected president, especially the anti-migrant ones, which blame migrant workers for the crises brought on by capitalism.

Argentina stands between the current inter-imperialist struggles. At the last BRICS summit in August 2023, Argentina was among the countries proposed to become a member of this grouping. BRICS is an intergovernmental organization comprising the capitalist bosses of Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. It was at the same time that the IMF granted a loan of several hundred millions of dollars in the country. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is a U.S.-controlled body that furthers capitalist expansion, always to the detriment of the working class of its member countries. These two events show how Argentina is being tossed between the influences of the two protagonist camps of the moment, the Western imperialists on one side and their rival imperialists on the other. Both sides are vying for economic and political control of the world's resources and wealth.

Argentine misleaders attack workers, line the ruler's pockets

Since the election of Milei, Argentina's bosses have faced a series of popular protest demonstrations (which are becoming increasingly illegal) against their "anti-democratic" measures. During the first mobilizations the police began to use excessive force against demonstrators and union members. Ten days after taking office, Milei published a "DNU" (decree of necessity and emergency), which aims to modify or repeal more than 300 standards, in particular removing rent controls, State intervention to protect the prices of essential products, weakening worker protections, enabling privatizations. For older workers, their pensions are being cut via an "economically viable" automatic calculation method—once again stealing from the poor to fill the coffers of the already-rich. While Milei talks about austerity measures for the working class, he has not renounced class privileges for himself and his bourgeoisie.

Liberals and Libertarians, fascists-in-arms

Milei's preparedness shows that the return of the extreme right was a well-planned project that was already underway. Milei's election was hailed by other hard rightliners such as Bolsonaro (former president of Brazil) and Trump (former president of the U.S.). Milei, like his fascist counterparts, calls himself an "ultra-liberal," trying to fool the masses into thinking he is really on their side, like the Nazis were called National Socialists and Mussolini started out as a so-called socialist—liberal or far-right fascist, they're all on the bosses' side.

The struggle in Argentina is a struggle that promises to be long and difficult for the Argentine workers and students who have a long tradition of fighting back in various forms of class struggle. What the current situation shows us is that our class in Argentina—and everywhere—cannot rely on reformers (liberal or fascist) destroy the capitalist system and replace it with communism—an egalitarian system that the working class controls to serve its own needs. We urge our comrades in Argentina to join with us in the Progressive Labor Party and fight for communist revolution. That is the only way that we will be able to liberate our class. ✪

Bella Ciao Lorrell

Continued from page 8

sharpest actions that took place nationally that year.

That same summer she led another struggle after city bosses in East Chicago tried to abruptly uproot the majority Black worker residents of the West Calumet Housing Complex after allowing them and their children to live for decades on soil contaminated with lead and arsenic. Lorrell personally made connections with mothers whose children had suffered serious health effects, driving them to doctor appointments as well as protests.

When the GEO corporation was trying to build an immigrant detention center in her area, Lorrell organized to have people oppose their efforts at every turn. She organized workers to go to council meetings and speak out against this racist project. Gary, Indiana is a majority Black city and as a Black worker, she spoke of solidarity with immigrants of all racial and ethnic backgrounds. Gary and the surrounding areas needed jobs (since so much manufacturing left the area) but she argued fiercely that jobs jailing other workers was not what the region needed or wanted. This was a struggle that was won—GEO did not get to build their immigrant jail.

Lorrell also participated in a coalition group that found out that a local airport was being used weekly to deport immigrants from the area. Weekly protests at the airport began and Lorrell once again played a leading role. Rejecting the average performative liberal protest tactics, she helped lead other workers onto the actual airport tarmac towards the airplanes during one particularly memorable confrontation against security forces in 2017.

Like millions of other antiracists around the world, Lorrell dove headlong into the mass rebellions that erupted after the murder of George Floyd in May 2020. She was a mainstay in all the protests in the region, pushing the envelope to be more openly confrontational with the killer cops and gutter racists across the suburbs. The militant organizing spaces that she helped develop stayed busy in the years that followed, notably when staging mass antisexist protests around reproductive justice after the reversal of Roe v Wade in 2022.

Her memory marches on

Lorrell was the stabilizing force in her family and cared for the previous generation with devotion and kindness. Whether it was driving her aunt, mom, or dad to their doctor's appointments, or having them move in with her, she always went the extra mile. Losing her is being felt deeply by her immediate family, her comrades, and her friends.

Speaking with a friend, she said, "You know, if something were to happen to me, don't mourn me with candles. Make it loud and revolutionary. Make it reflect the movement I gave my energy and passion to. Don't stand around silently with candles. Have a bullhorn, march the street, and more than anything join the struggle I believe in so strongly."

We will do just that, comrade. We will pick up your rifle and keep fighting this racist and sexist system that took you from us far too soon✎✪



RED EYE ON THE NEWS . . .

U.N. calls Palestinian conditions "horrific"

New York Times, 1/13–The twin specters of a widening regional war and intensified suffering of civilians loomed over the Middle East on Saturday as the Iran-backed Houthi militia in Yemen threatened to respond to American airstrikes, and a senior U.N. official warned of a "horrific" humanitarian crisis in Gaza that he said was hurtling toward famine...In northern Gaza, corpses are left in the road and starving people stop aid trucks "in search of anything they can get to survive," Martin Griffiths, the top U.N. aid official, told the United Nations Security Council on Friday. With the risk of famine in Gaza "growing by the day," he repeated earlier criticisms of Israel, which he said was delaying or denying permission to humanitarian convoys bringing urgently needed aid to northern Gaza... Israeli attacks have killed at least 23,000 people in Gaza since, according to the Gaza health authorities. At least 1.9 million people, or 85 percent of the population, have been forced from their homes, Mr. Griffiths said.

Gaza war spreads into a wider conflict

Al Jazeera, 1/12–For months, top United States officials have repeatedly said that President Joe Biden does not want to see Israel's war in the Gaza Strip escalate into a wider conflict in the Middle East...later, the US confirmed it had collaborated with the United Kingdom to launch "strikes against a number of targets in Yemen used by Houthi rebels'', in coordination with a handful of other countries..."It does run contrary to what the administration has been saying, but it was also inevitable, "Everybody watching this situation knew that it was a matter of time before the war in Gaza spilled out across the region...The Iran-aligned Houthis control large swaths of Yemen including the western coast overlooking the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, which leads to the Red Sea. The group began firing missiles at Israel and attacking commercial ships shortly after the war on Gaza began in October.

Is inter imperialist struggle accelerating?

The Guardian, 1/13–The first of what may be many US-led air strikes on Iranian-backed Houthi Shia militants in Yemen... reflects...another unwelcome fact. The dominant power in the Middle East is no longer the US, western-aligned Egypt, Saudi Arabia or even Israel. It is the Houthis' main ally, Iran...China has created spheres of geopolitical and economic influence to rival and, if possible, supplant those of the US... In 2021, the two countries [China and Iran] signed a 25-year strategic investment and energy pact. Under Chinese sponsorship, Iran has joined the Brics group and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation...Iran sells millions of barrels of discounted crude to China each month, transported there by "dark fleet" oil tankers...With Russia...Iran supplies armed drones that Moscow uses to kill Ukrainians. US intelligence reportedly believes Russia's Wagner mercenary group plans to provide Hezbollah with a medium-range air defense system...Iran...may soon take delivery of advanced Russian Sukhoi SU-35 fighter-bombers... nuclear weapons-related enrichment programme is reportedly advancing rapidly...an Iranian bomb, may be closer than ever.

War in Asia would be much worse

Bloomberg, 1/8–War over Taiwan would have a cost in blood and treasure so vast that even those unhappiest with the status quo have reason not to risk it. Bloomberg Economics estimate the price tag at around $10 trillion, equal to about 10% of global GDP — dwarfing the blow from the war in Ukraine, Covid pandemic and Global Financial Crisis.

China's rising economic and military heft, Taiwan's burgeoning sense of national identity, and fractious relations between Beijing and Washington mean the conditions for a crisis are in place...Everyone from Wall Street investors to military planners and the swathe of businesses that rely on Taiwan's semiconductors are already moving to hedge against the risk. National security experts in the Pentagon, think tanks in the US and Japan, and global consulting firms are gaming out scenarios from a Chinese maritime "quarantine" of Taiwan, to the seizure of Taiwan's outlying islands, and a full-scale Chinese invasion.

BELLA CIAO, LORRELL!

A PASSIONATE COMMUNIST LEADER GONE TOO SOON

You know, if something were to happen to me, don't mourn me with candles. Make it loud and revolutionary. Make it reflect the movement I gave my energy and passion to. Don't stand around silently with candles. Have a bullhorn, march the street, and more than anything join the struggle I believe in so strongly

-Lorrell



On November 30th, 2023, we lost Lorrell, a devoted comrade, organizer, teacher, leader, and friend, to a medical complication. Her absence creates a hole in our lives that is immense and unfathomable. Trying to understand this tragedy is impossible and awful. We will carry on in her memory but what has been lost can never be replaced. We will do her justice by celebrating her life, spirit, and commitment to the international working class.

Early life, meeting Progressive Labor Party

Lorrell spent her early years in the southeast suburbs of Chicago, a region marked by brutal environmental racism due to concentrations of heavy industry and pollution. Undoubtedly witnessing firsthand from a young age how capitalism treats whole populations of workers – particularly Black and Brown workers – as disposable, influenced Lorrell's understanding of the system and fueled her desire to fight to destroy it.

She met the Progressive Labor Party while a university student and quickly became a committed comrade in the struggle for revolution. Her sharp insights on how racism is indispensable to capitalism notably superseded the liberal interpretations of race and class within the mass movement in general. Her dialectical understanding of how racism, sexism, and capitalism all work to reinforce one another and oppress all working people influenced her to organize firmly based on multiracial working-class unity.

After graduating college, Lorrell committed herself to teaching at local universities attended by working-class students. She also worked as a program director for a disability rights organization, one of her life's principal passions. She went above and beyond to fight alongside other workers with disabilities to demand their respect and basic accommodations so often denied under the profit system.

Although Lorrell always acknowledged the scale of the class struggle in nearby Chicago, she never once abandoned what she saw as revolutionary potential in workers and students in the smaller towns and cities of Northwest Indiana where she lived. To this end, she passionately advocated like she did for so many other issues for their inclusion in the Party's overall political work. Because of her, countless people became closer to PLP and remain in our base to this day.

Tireless leadership fighting racism, sexism, and capitalism

As Lorrell's experience and commitment grew, she was asked to give more leadership, joining the area city committee which included leaders from Chicago and Northwest Indiana clubs. Lorrell played a great role in this body and especially stepped up in 2016 when two leaders were gone for the year. During this year she helped plan the demonstration we held in front of the home of Jason Van Dyke, the racist kkkop murderer of 17-year-old Black teenager Laquan McDonald.

This action took weeks of planning and multiple meetings to make sure everyone agreed with and was committed to the plan. Security planning was crucial given we were directly targeting Van Dyke where he lived. The action was successful and caught Van Dyke unaware—the dirtbag was actually out front watering his lawn when we marched up! This was one of the

Continued on page 7

WRITE FOR CHALLENGE!

CHALLENGE strives to be the communist paper for and by the international working class. We call on all readers, supporters, and comrades to submit class struggle articles, analytical pieces, original photos and graphics, letters, and political cartoons.

The next deadline is night of Friday, January 26th

Send to desafio.challenge@gmail.com. For some guidance and house style rules, please go to www.bit.ly/338ZJow

All submissions are open to collective discussion, struggle, and change. See sidebar on page 2 about fighting for collectivity and against a cult of the individual.

